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## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **For immediate release**

#### **State to host pandemic influenza summit Thursday**

INDIANAPOLIS (March 20, 2006) – U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt will join Governor Mitch Daniels for “Indiana Prepares: Pandemic Influenza State Summit” at Purdue University in West Lafayette on Thursday (March 23).

Leavitt and Daniels will join participants for the afternoon portion of the daylong summit, which will be co-hosted by the Indiana State Department of Health and the Indiana Department of Homeland Security. The event will provide guidance to Hoosiers about how to plan for this potential disruption in their homes, communities and businesses. Senior officials from other federal agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Agriculture, also will participate in the event with state officials.

The summit is scheduled for 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Purdue Memorial Union (north ballroom) in West Lafayette. Registration information is available on the Department of Health Web site at [www.in.gov/isdh/](http://www.in.gov/isdh/).

The event will be streamed live by the health department and may be viewed at this site: [www.statehealth.in.gov](http://www.statehealth.in.gov). Individuals may also view the Web cast at their local health department or local Purdue Extension Services Office and are invited to call those offices to check. All materials distributed during the event will also be posted on the Department of Health Web site on Thursday.

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. Pandemic influenza occurs when a new influenza virus emerges for which people have little or no immunity and for which there is no vaccine. According to state health officials, pandemic influenza would spread easily person-to-person, cause serious illness, and could sweep across the state, the nation, and around the world in very short time.

Here are key events during the day that may be of interest to media. All will take place at the Purdue Memorial Union:

**8:15 a.m.** – Welcome, Lieutenant Governor Becky Skillman

**8:30 a.m.** – Presentation on pandemic avian influenza, State Health Commissioner Dr. Judith Monroe

**9 to 10:15 a.m.** – How families, individuals, schools and businesses can prepare, including a presentation by Dr. Eric Dietz, executive director of the state Department of Homeland Security

**10:45 to 12:30 p.m.** – Breakout sessions on pandemic flu preparations for various sectors, such as law enforcement, business, local governments, and health care providers

**1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.** – HHS Secretary Leavitt and Governor Daniels will make comments and join state and federal officials for a roundtable discussion of state and federal preparations

**2:45 p.m.** – News conference with secretary and governor (faculty lounge, third floor, Memorial Union)

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